Chapter 19

JUN MOCHIZUKI

THE CASE STUDY OF VANITAS

BLACK SMOKE OBSTRUCTS MY VISION, AND BEYOND IT...

...LIE COUNTLESS CORPSES.

THE STENCH OF BURNING MEAT STINGS MY NOSTRILS.

THE FAINT VOICES OF PRECIOUS CHILDREN, ASKING FOR HELP...

THEY ARE CALLING MY NAME.

KON KNOCK
KON
KON
KON

THEY'VE GIVEN ME A CARD TO GIVE YOU.

OH!
GOOD MORNING, MONSIEUR VANITAS.

HEY, AMELIA. WHAT SORT OF PERSON BROUGHT THIS CARD?

...I WONDER WHERE ON EARTH HE WAS SLEEPING BEFORE.

...I HAVE BEEN SLEEPING HERE LATELY, AS I'M SUPPOSED TO.

YOU'RE NEVER IN YOUR ROOM, YOU KNOW.

I'M SO GLAD I MANAGED TO GET IT TO YOU.

BATAN (WHLID)

I'M SORRY... I WAS ONLY ASKED TO DELIVER IT A MOMENT AGO BY SOMEONE ELSE, SO I DIDN'T SEE THE SENDER.

SUPI (SNOOZE)

すぴ——...

WHA... IS THAT ALL RIGHT?

YEAH. I WOULDN'T GO NEAR HIM.

!?

HE'LL MAKE A HUG-PILLOW OUT OF YOU.

!?

MONSIEUR NOÉ!?

HE FELL AGAIN, HM?

A HUG-PILLOW!

YOU'RE... GOING SOME-WHERE?

ZURU

...HUH... VAANITAS?

ZURU- (SLIDE)

...??

NI (GRIN)

IT'S A SECRET.

BATAN (SLAM)

バタン!!

IS IT ALL RIGHT TO LEAVE MONSIEUR NOÉ THAT WAY!?

HUH... WAIT! MONSIEUR VANITAS!

AND ON THAT NOTE, I'M GOING OUT.

PICHICHI (TWITTER)

PICHI (CHIRP)

SUU (SNOOZE)

YOU HAVE A VERY UNIQUE WAY OF SLEEPING.

GABA (BOLT)

!?

...

LORD RUTHVEN !?

BONJOUR, BOY.

DID YOU HAVE A NICE DREAM?

JUN MOCHIZUKI

THE CASE STUDY OF VANITAS

Mémoire 19 Serment

SPELL-BOUND

IT'S ONE OF MY FAVORITE PLACES IN THE HUMAN WORLD.

SOWA (FIDGET)

LORD RUTH-VEN...

UM ...

SOWA

THIS IS A VENERABLE OLD CAFÉ, ESTABLISHED AT THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

NO ...

I APOLOGIZE FOR BARGING IN ON YOU SO ABRUPTLY.

...WHY IS IT THAT WE'RE THE ONLY ONES IN THIS "VENERABLE OLD CAFÉ"?

AH. I RESERVED THE WHOLE PLACE TODAY.

RESER —!?

NATURALLY, THERE ARE A MULTITUDE OF QUESTIONS I'D LIKE TO ASK THAT HUMAN. HOWEVER...

WITH... ME? NOT WITH VANITAS?

I WANTED TO HAVE A LEISURELY TALK WITH YOU.

...IF I DID ASK, I'D WAGER HE WOULDN'T TELL ME A THING ABOUT HIMSELF.

...

IT WAS THE SAME *BACK THEN*.

THERE'S MUCH I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU AS WELL...

IN THE END, HE ONLY EXTRACTED INFORMATION THAT WAS USEFUL TO HIM, AND I WASN'T EVEN GIVEN TIME TO ASK QUESTIONS.

...KIN OF THE BLUE MOON.

ABOUT THE BOOK OF VANITAS

AND... ABOUT YOU YOURSELF.

.....

EVEN SO, YOU MUST KNOW WHAT SORT OF PERSON HE IS.

...DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT VANITAS'S PAST EITHER.

I...

KACHA (CLINK)

THAT ALONE IS MORE THAN ENOUGH REASON FOR ME TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN YOU.

BESIDES, YOU ARE THE CHILD OF THE SHAPELESS ONE.

PHEW...I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO TAKE US TO TASK FOR WHAT HAPPENED UNDERGROUND THE OTHER DAY.

MAYBE HE HASN'T FOUND OUT YET?

TO THINK THERE WAS A VAMPIRE WHO COULD TREAT THAT MAN SO CASUALLY!
HA
HA
HA!
HA
.....
.....

GOHO (KOFF)
..!? HAH! HA-HA-HA! THAT'S FANTASTIC!
HA
HA
HA

GOFU (CHOKE)
I KNOW IT'S A BIT LATE TO BE ASKING, BUT
IS MY TEACHER THAT AMAZING A VAMPIRE?

KUKU (CHUCKLE)

...I DON'T REALLY KNOW EITHER.
!
HISO (WHISPER)
THE TRUTH IS...

WAAAAH!
EVEN MARQUIS MACHINA SAYS HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS ORIGINS.
JUST HOW LONG HAS HE *EXISTED AS A VAMPIRE*?

THAT IS PRECISELY WHY EVERYONE FEARS HIM.
NO ONE KNOWS A THING ABOUT HIM.

HE WAS THE FIRST VAMPIRE TO SERVE HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN AND STAY BY HER SIDE, AND THE ONE WHO DID SO THE LONGEST.

THAT IS ONE OF THE FEW THINGS WE DO KNOW ABOUT HIM.

...THAT SAID.

HE DIDN'T TAKE ANY SORT OF IMPORTANT POST.

HE FOISTED THE TITLE AND TERRITORY HE RECEIVED FROM HER MAJESTY ONTO HIS ADOPTED CHILD AND LIVES A LIFE OF LEISURE IN THE COUNTRY, WITHOUT TROUBLING HIMSELF OVER THE WORLD.

BUTSU (MUTTER)

HE CHANGES HIS NAME AND HIS SHAPE AT THE DROP OF A HAT, BUT IF ANYONE CALLS HIM BY THE WRONG NAME, HE BEATS THEM WITHIN AN INCH OF THEIR LIFE ON THE SPOT...

BUTSU

BUTSU

HE'S A THUNDERING NUISANCE!

AND THAT'S WHY THEY CALL HIM "THE SHAPELESS ONE"?

THAT'S RIGHT.

...I'M STARTING TO FEEL VERY BAD ABOUT ALL THIS.

I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT MY TEACHER

KIRI (PANG)

KIRI

HA HA HA HA!

HM? WHAT IS IT?

CHIRA (GLANCE)

...

I'M SORRY. IT'S NOTHING.

DU (FWIP)

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. GO ON, SAY IT.

I JUST THOUGHT, WHEN I'M TALKING WITH YOU, I START TO FEEL... AS IF I'M WITH MY TEACHER.

THAT'S ODD, ISN'T IT?

YOU HAVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERES, AND YET...

HA

HA

TALKING WITH YOU IS...

...A LOT OF FUN.

I WONDER WHAT IT IS. THE WAY YOU SPEAK?

IT MAKES ME FEEL AS IF I'M TAKING A CLASS.

OH... I'M SORRY. HAVE I OFFENDED YOU?

NO...

YOU'VE MADE ME FEEL RATHER NOSTALGIC.

LONG AGO...

...I DID WORK AS A TEACHER OF SORTS.

I GAVE THEM KNOWLEDGE SO THAT THEY COULD THINK.

SO THAT WE COULD BUILD A BETTER FUTURE TOGETHER.

MANY PUPILS LOOKED UP TO ME AND GATHERED AROUND ME.

THIS WAS BACK WHEN HUMANS AND VAMPIRES STILL HATED AND KILLED EACH OTHER.

DO YOU STILL SEE THEM?

THEY'RE DEAD.

THEY WERE ALL...

...KILLED.

SFX KUSU (SNICKER)

YOU'RE KIND, BOY.

I'VE MADE YOU REMEMBER SOMETHING PAINFUL.

...I'M SORRY.

...I'M SURE MY DAYS WOULD BE PLEASANT.

IF I HAD A STUDENT LIKE YOU NOW...

...

IF...

I'M WORRIED, THOUGH.

SOMEONE WHO'LL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR KINDNESS AND USE YOU MAY APPEAR SOMEDAY.

...WOULDN'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

VANITAS ...

HAH (GASP)

...YOU MEAN VANITAS?

I WONDER... YES... YES, HE ACTUALLY MIGHT!

...WAIT. THAT'S A LIE, ISN'T IT. HE'S DONE ALL SORTS OF THINGS TILL NOW!

...HE CAN'T STAND ANYONE GETTING HURT FOR HIS SAKE.

HE TRIES TO USE EVERYONE, AND YET...

...INCON-SISTENT.

HE'S...

.....IF YOU ASK ME...

HE TOLD ME THEY WERE BOTH TERRIBLY UGLY, ENDLESSLY SELFISH CREATURES.

...

HUMANS AND VAMPIRES WERE THE SAME.

HE... VANITAS SAID THAT...

BUT YOU DON'T...HATE VAMPIRES?

...I FELT LONELINESS.

WHEN I HEARD THAT, IT IRRITATED ME...

...AND AT THE SAME TIME...

—AND WHAT DO YOU THINK?

HUH ...?

.....

TO YOUR MIND, WHAT ARE VAMPIRES ...

...AND WHAT ARE HUMANS?

I HEAR YOU WERE TAKEN IN AND FOSTERED BY HUMANS WHEN YOU WERE SMALL.

...? I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE...

I'VE INVESTIGATED YOUR PAST...

...IN A BRIEF WAY.

NOÉ ARCHIVISTE.

ARE YOU A FRIEND OF THE VAMPIRES?

OR DO YOU SIDE WITH THE HUMANS, AGAINST US?

I'M NEITHER.

BY ITSELF, JUST BEING VAMPIRE OR HUMAN COULD NEVER BE ENOUGH TO MAKE SOMEONE AN ENEMY.

TO ME, "THE ENEMY" ...

...IS WHATEVER HURTS SOMEONE SPECIAL TO ME OR SOMETHING I WANT TO PROTECT.

I LIKE VAMPIRES.

AND, IN THE SAME WAY...

...I LIKE HUMANS.

...I SEE.

I UNDER-STAND.

YOU WON'T DO.

ZURU (DRAG)

ALL OF A SUDDEN... MY BODY... WON'T...

GACHAN (CRASH)

GACHA (LINK)

...?

...?

WHAT?.. IS...?

GAKUN (LURCH)

!?

LORD ...

RUTHV —

ZUPU (BITE)

JYURU (SLURP)

JYURU...

WH...

WHAT'S ...

...

HAP...

PENI ...

HFF

HFF

BIKU (FLINCH)

...!

MMF- GHK!

ZO

ZO

ZO

"SWEAR."

"ONE TIME ONLY..."

"...YOU WILL OBEY MY ORDER, NO MATTER WHAT IT IS."

...
"SWEAR"
!!

"...WHEN I WISH IT..."

"SWEAR IT."

"ONE TIME ONLY..."

"WHEN... YOU WISH IT..."

"I WILL OBEY... YOUR ORDER..."

"...NO MATTER WHAT IT IS."

...

"I...

...SWEAR."

...

"I SWEAR IT."

PACHIN (SNAP)

GOOD.

WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL HIM!?

PAN (BANG)

GYURUIN (CIRCLE)

ZA (SSTO)

ZA

ZA

ZA

KATSU (TAK)

...

WHY ?

DOSA (WHUMP)

"THE SHAPELESS ONE"... WE DON'T KNOW WHY THAT MONSTER WAS KEEPING AN ARCHIVISTE NEAR HIM. SINCE THAT'S THE CASE...

...IT MAY BE WISER TO KEEP HIM ALIVE, AS A PAWN.

I CHANGED MY MIND.

WE CAN GET RID OF HIM WHENEVER WE WISH.

HE'S JUST A CHILD.

I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR YOU, BOY.

...BE SURE TO REMEMBER THAT OATH.
WHEN THE TIME COMES...

AHA.

THERE SHE IS.

I NEVER DREAMED YOU'D CALL ME OUT...

THAT WAS A SURPRISE.

...JEANNE.

VANITAS.

COME
DATE ME.
TO BE CONTINUED...

The Case Study of Vanitas
Chapter 19

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